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# SCIENCE

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FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE.

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## ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT TO THE MATHEMATICAL AND PHYSICAL SECTION OF THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE<sup>1</sup>

It is with much misgiving that I endeavor to discharge the traditional duty of the president of a section of the British Association. So many other duties seem to find a natural resting-place with any one who has to reckon at the same time with the immediate requirements of the public, the claims of scientific opinion, and the interests of posterity, that, unless you are content with such contribution towards the advancement of the sciences of mathematics and physics as my daily experience enables me to offer you, I shall find the task impossible.

With a leaning towards periodicity perhaps slightly unorthodox I have looked back to see what they were doing in Section A fifty years ago. Richard Owen was president of the association, William Whewell was president of Section A for the fifth time.

At the meeting of 1858 they must have spent some time over nineteen very substantial reports on researches in science, which included a large section of Mallett's facts and theory of earthquake phenomena, magnetic surveys of Great Britain and of Ireland, and, oddly enough, an account of the self-recording anemometer by Beckley; perhaps a longer time was required for fifty-seven papers contributed to the section, but very little was spent

<sup>1</sup> Dublin, 1908.